

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. BILL SHUSTER

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 21, 2013

Mr. SCHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 600 I was not present for the vote due to a family emergency.

Had I been present, I would have voted “aye.”

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. KERRY L. BENTIVOLIO

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 21, 2013

Mr. BENTIVOLIO. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall Nos. 588 and 589, I was unable to be present. My wife had surgery that day, November 18, 2013, and I needed to be by her side.

Had I been present, I would have voted “aye” on all said votes.

RECOGNIZING DAVID LAVERY AND THE MARS SCIENCE LABORATORY TEAM FOR RECEIPT OF THE SAMUEL J. HEYMAN SCIENCE AND ENVIRONMENTAL MEDAL

HON. GERALD E. CONNOLY

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 21, 2013

Mr. CONNOLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize and congratulate my constituent David Lavery, as well as his colleagues on the Mars Science Laboratory Team for being awarded the Samuel J. Heyman Science and Environment Medal. The Samuel J. Heyman Service to America Medals (referred to as the Sammies) pay tribute to America’s dedicated federal workforce, highlighting those who have made significant contributions to our country. Honorees are chosen based on their commitment and innovation, as well as the impact of their work on addressing the needs of the nation.

As Program Executive for Solar System Exploration, Mr. Lavery leads the Curiosity rover mission to Mars that is exploring the Red Planet’s geology and climate and assessing whether conditions are favorable for microbial life and future human exploration. This historic mission is the culmination of more than a decade of perseverance, engineering breakthroughs, and scientific innovations. The mission’s findings will rewrite the textbooks on the geology of Mars and shed light on the possibility of life-supporting environments there.

Working on the cutting edge of space exploration at NASA was Mr. Lavery’s childhood dream. Although unable to become an astronaut, he has twice helped place American technology on the surface of another planet. His first flight project was Sojourner—a rover sent to Mars in 1997. For the Curiosity mission, Lavery carefully supervised every step of the process leading to the launch. According to Jonathan Rall, assistant director of NASA’s Planetary Science Division, “Without Dave’s

constant oversight for this mission, it would not have been successful.”

This award is just the latest achievement in an amazing public service career that extends beyond NASA to include his years mentoring the robotics team at Herndon High School, guiding them in national competitions and inspiring generations of young Americans to pursue careers in science and technology.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in extending our highest praise and congratulations to the Dave Lavery and the eight other public servants from around the country who have been honored with Samuel J. Heyman Service to America Medals this year. Their achievements range from working to eradicate polio in India to landing an exploratory vehicle on Mars to saving the Air Force more than \$1 billion in 2012 by reducing energy consumption. It has been my great privilege and honor to represent tens of thousands of exceptional Federal workers who hail from Virginia’s 11th Congressional District. They all deserve our thanks and respect.

SHARING STORIES IN SUPPORT OF COMPREHENSIVE IMMIGRATION REFORM

HON. JOE GARCIA

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 21, 2013

Mr. GARCIA. Mr. Speaker, the following are stories of individuals affected by our nation’s broken immigration system:

Story 1: Legalization is necessary. There are many things that people don’t know that the authorities do. In my case, I’ve lived through three or four accidents that I saw, and I am the only one who saw and I didn’t testify because I’m scared. I think that because of that they closed a lot of cases. I’d like something to be done. Also, at work, there are three or four companies that haven’t paid me and discriminate in a lot of things that happen. We, who work with meat, know a lot of things that aren’t easy to say to anyone for fear of what that information would do and because of that, reform is necessary.

I’m Mexican and I’ve been here for 21 years. Ultimately, the truth that I’ve seen a lot of things that shouldn’t exist for human beings to practice these types of things. Because realistically, all of us deserve to live as best as possible and I think that there is a way that we can live and do whatever type of work, without being treated the way they treat us. We want to be welcome wherever we want to go.

Story 2: I arrived in the United States approximately 25 years ago. Thank God I am now an American citizen, but I have many friends who suffer because they do not have their documents. One of the hardships is that they are not allowed to work or go to many places. For example, there are jobs that they are able to do, but they’re not allowed into those places. So they can make \$20 or \$25 per hour, but they’re making \$15 or less because they can’t go to the place, even though they can do the job. So I say yes to immigration reform because it helps the government as well. The government makes money for giving out papers. People are going to buy cars, they’re going to buy houses, they’re going to travel within the United States. So, the money that they’re going to pay to get their papers is more than they contribute to the United States now. They will travel to their

home countries to visit their parents, their siblings—I think that will be something very good for the country as well.

Story 3: I arrived 22 years ago from San Marcos, Guatemala. Thank God we had the opportunity to have papers, but we are here to support our people. We want everyone to be equal and to have the opportunity that we had. So it is great that there is a possibility at reform for all. The only thing we can do is support in any way we can—by meeting and being with them. I think that people can work legally and do many things.

Story 4: I’m from Guatemala. I’ve been here with my wife for nine years and we are nothing in this country. We came here for the purpose of allowing our family to succeed. In Guatemala, the circumstances over there don’t allow for success. For that reason, we came here to have a life a little better than what we had there. All we are asking is for the Senators and the people listening to this recording to support us because the majority of Hispanics that are in the United States are here to work and support this country. For that, we want to be heard and we want to say yes. We want to arrive to citizenship because we need it. You see on TV and in the news that many families are suffering and many families are crying. There have been many deportations, and we don’t want that that continue. We want all families to feel happy and live happily here, but they’re scared. We don’t want people to continue living in fear. For that we make the invitation to collaborate, because everything we can do, we will do. We don’t want racism, for example. Here there are various nationalities from various countries, and we are unified for this cause. We will continue uniting, for whatever work there is. I work in landscaping, cutting branches on trees, on palms, cleaning gardens. Right now, we don’t have kids and my wife and I have been married for seven years.

Story 5: I am originally from Guatemala. I immigrated to the United States in 1987 at age 18. I turned 18 while crossing the desert. There I celebrated my birthday. From there I went to work on a farm for three or four years. In that time, the situation was much more difficult, but I had the opportunity to work in different jobs. Around that time I was a beneficiary of the NACARA law, which allowed me to apply. I saw that the NACARA law benefitted me a lot because I was able to have some economic stability for my family. I have been married for 22 years, and I have a 19-year-old son. The NACARA law has always helped me, so of course I feel like there is a need for immigration reform because it would benefit my community so much. The people who are here can grow economically and help their families. They can create businesses and jobs in our country. That is why people emigrate here, because there are no jobs in their home countries. I don’t know, governments don’t invest in creating jobs and so people in immigration limbo don’t want to invest because they don’t know what will happen. I feel that it’s a necessity, and I think we deserve it. We are working people. The majority that come here come for work. We don’t come for public benefits. In my community, very few are the type to try to get social assistance. The majority, like my case, came and paid taxes, and they have been paying taxes since coming to the United States.

They deported me in 1987 after I was detained in Krome. I was held in Krome for a month or a month and a half before they sent me to my land. It’s very frustrating, because I’m from a town very far from the capital. At that time, it was about eight hours

by truck. I didn't know anything when I arrived. I was in a city I had never been to before. It was very difficult, but I didn't turn back because I had no alternative. There was no work. I graduated with my Master's degree and came back here because there were no job opportunities there and because the political situation was very hard.

Story 6: I've been in this country 17 years. I came alone, made my family here, so for sure my wife is here by my side. I have two daughters, one who is 13 years old, and I still have no papers. But I've kept going because now I have no choice but to keep fighting harder, for my daughters' benefit more than anything. I'm working and, I don't know, I hope that this immigration reform that they're fighting over will be given to us because it will allow us to benefit the country. For me and my kids, immigration reform will give them greater security to have their parents here in this country without having to hide from immigration and the police. For work, I can't drive a truck to get to my job. I have to go with someone that has a license to drive, and it's very much the difference in salary, even though I know the work and everything, it's a point less for me. That is the first thing for me. I want to buy a car or something that can benefit me and my family and help me to do my duty for this country. Up until now I've tried to not put myself into problems. I try not to go out too much or go to parties and things like that. I'm over that, and I'd rather be with my family and without any problems. But, I can't go wherever I want. My wife has family here, they all have papers. I haven't seen my family in 16 or 17 years. My boss fired me and I'd like to go to Mexico, but I can't because I wouldn't be able to come back. I have no other choice but to stay for my kids.

Story 7: I'm a little nervous because my story is sad, but I'm now happy because I am without problems, without any preoccupation. They confused me with a certain person, but I never robbed anyone and I always maintained that it wasn't me. They received the evidence from the other person, it was very sad and painful, and because being in prison is not easy at all and is very unpleasant. It's very sad for people as well as their families. My family worried day and night, and I was wondering that I that I wouldn't get out, but with the will of God I got out with a \$7,500 bail. I had about four court dates. They sent me to Krome, and from there I told the judge to give me voluntary leave to my country. When I left, they told me that I had to report to Mexican immigration. I went and entered and delivered a paper that they gave me, but I always knew that I wanted to return. I was in my country for a month, and then came back. Since then, thank God, I have not gotten in trouble. I don't drive, and I don't do anything because I am holding out because if God helps us with this reform we will come out ahead. Firstly to God, we ask a lot, to the congressmen, to the Senate and the President, that they have a lot of consideration for so many people who need equality. I came in April of 1990. I am Mexican, and all my siblings are citizens. I'm the only one who is not. I hope for the day when I can be equal to everyone else.

Story 8: I'm a mother of two children who were born here in Florida. They deported my husband to Guatemala five years ago. We are united and want to ask Congress and the White House to support us, that yes we can, that now is the time for them to give us immigration reform. We are encountering many families going through difficult situations and we ask, we beg, we ask wholeheartedly, that we are supported in this country. All of us immigrants reinforce this country's economy. We beg that they give us

immigration reform. They stopped my husband and asked for a license, which he didn't have. That was the reason they deported him. It's a very difficult case and my kids suffer a lot from the absence of their father.

Story 9: I support immigration reform because I've encountered those problems. When I didn't have papers, I was always living in hiding and I do not want others to go through the same problem. I wish that everyone could have their papers to live in peace and tranquility.

Story 10: I am an American citizen and I want to remind the Congressmen of the United States that my vote will go to the people who have humanity when it's time to decide on immigration reform. Make it a humane immigration reform, not one based on the whims of Congressmen. My vote will always be for the humane Congressmen. Immigration reform will help all those that don't have papers or a path to citizenship. We remember that there should be a path to citizenship with a quick process, not like what Senator Marco Rubio and his colleagues want. We will always vote against the people who think like that.

Story 11: I'm Nicaraguan. I am 35 years old and came to this country 13 years ago. My dream is to bring my family to the United States. I came with just that one goal because the democratic system in my country doesn't work. I've lived through many hardships and because of those I immigrated to the United States. Now with 13 years here, we ask for immigration reform and the opportunity for citizenship because we want to be incorporated into society. We want to be a part of it. We want the opportunity to vote, to apply to whatever we need. Immigration reform will be good for the country as well as for us if we can contribute. My dream is to buy my house and continue in my studies because I don't want to stay stagnant. I want to move my daughters forward. I have two daughters; one was born in Nicaragua and the other is an American citizen who was born in this country. I can't imagine returning to my country. I don't have any plans to do so. I hope that the legislators and President Obama support reform, because now we are ready to be a part of this great country.

Story 12: I've been here for 12 years, going on 13, and I brought my two daughters, when one was two and a half and the other was a year old. They believe that this is their country, and I do as well. I came here and we liked it. We came from my country because life is very difficult there. Now there's a lot of crime. I am Mexican and it is very hard to live there now. My daughters don't want to return to Mexico because of everything we've seen over there—a lot of crime, a lot of killing. There's no work, no way to move forward. My daughters say that this is their country, they are Mexican but they are home. They speak English and Spanish very well, but they say that all they know is this country. So I say yes to citizenship for all the people that are like me in this country. We don't have licenses to work or to even look for a job. I had a job and some people did me harm. They sent me a letter and fired me from the job, and now I am unemployed. I need to work to help my daughters get ahead, and so I say that now is the time that we help all people, the 11 million undocumented people in this country. We came for honest work. We came to do the jobs that many people won't do. Please, it is the time for citizenship, something so we can be okay here and so we don't have to go somewhere and be afraid that they'll stop the bus where we are, that they take us to immigration and deport us while my daughters are in school. It's an ugly and sad thing, and I say yes that now is the time for immigration re-

form. To the Senators and all the people hearing this message, please help us for the immigration reform that we are all hoping for and we hope that this is the year that it happens.

Story 13: I'm Nicaraguan and got TPS in 1998. I had a problem. A policeman gave me a DUI because I had a neck problem. I lost consciousness because of the medicine that I took, which was not supposed to be taken while driving, but I did it because I needed to pick up some money urgently. I say yes to citizenship. Right now I am in a limbo because of my immigration status. They removed my TPS. After they removed my TPS, I was sent to immigration court with a lawyer who told me to apply for political asylum. But they didn't approve it and asked me for voluntary departure. Every day I feel that, if they get me, I am going to be deported to my country. Now I have 16 years working here contributing to the productivity and economy of this country. I have worked honestly. The problem I had was because I wasn't well represented in court about the DUI. I paid lawyers but it was useless for me because they were not able to defend me. I have evidence that proves that the police gave false evidence. I was an industrial electrical engineer in my country, and I intend to work with dignity, honesty, with the sweat of my brow to succeed, because if I go back to my country, I have no chance of surviving there.

Story 14: I arrived in the United States in 1985 to study. I have three kids, and we need immigration reform. Please. In the name of God, we need this reform because it is hard not having a license.

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HON. BILL SHUSTER

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 21, 2013

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 601, I was not present for the vote due to a family emergency.

Had I been present, I would have voted "nay."

A TRIBUTE TO WILL CROCKER

HON. MIKE McINTYRE

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 21, 2013

Mr. McINTYRE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a truly outstanding North Carolinian, Will Crocker, who has served as the Clerk of Court for Johnston County, North Carolina, for almost thirty-five years. Mr. Crocker assumed his current post in 1978, but has been an outstanding public servant since 1959, when he first began working as a clerk for Selma Recorder Court. He has since dedicated himself wholly to bettering this great community, and I ask you to join me in recognizing his long and honorable career.

Mr. Crocker's hard work and devotion have been vital to the continual development of Johnston County. Throughout Mr. Crocker's